



Department of Justice

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Federal Indictments Charge Inter-related Cockfighting, Racketeering And Drug Trafficking Rings in Oregon and Washington

*Agents Conduct Arrests and Execute 28 Search Warrants in Two States
17 Indictments Charge 63 Defendants*

Portland, Ore. - This morning the U.S. District Court in Portland unsealed 17 indictments charging 63 separate defendants with conspiracy, operating an illegal gambling business, multiple violations of the Animal Welfare Act, interstate travel in aid of a racketeering enterprise, and various drug-trafficking crimes. The indictments are the result of a two-year investigation of interrelated cockfighting and narcotics rings by federal, state, and local agencies in Oregon and Washington.

Over the past weekend agents executed 28 search warrants and arrested 51 defendants in Oregon and Washington. Approximately 36 defendants will appear for arraignment in U.S. District Court in Portland today at 1:30 p.m. Others will appear today in U.S. District Court in Medford, Eugene and in Yakima and Seattle, Washington.

"This long investigation and the resulting indictments demonstrate the close relationship between cockfighting and drug-trafficking in the Pacific Northwest. The U.S. Attorney's Office will vigorously enforce the Federal Animal Welfare Act and the gambling and narcotics statutes in punishing and deterring this criminal conduct," stated U.S. Attorney Karin J. Immergut.

"As evidenced through this investigation, animal fighting can certainly develop into a large criminal enterprise," said Special Agent in Charge James E. Mendenhall, Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Agriculture. "The OIG will continue to pursue substantive allegations of animal fighting, and will work in concert with other federal, state and local law enforcement agencies to that end."

"Narcotics trafficking is not just a criminal or social problem unto itself. It facilitates and promotes other criminal activity, as this case clearly demonstrates," said DEA Special Agent in Charge Arnold R. Moorin. "We are proud to have worked with our state, local and federal law enforcement partners to help bring the individuals involved in these crimes to justice. As a result of the comprehensive collaborative effort put forth by our local, state and federal law enforcement counterparts, spanning from Oregon to Washington, many communities were the beneficiaries of a successful unified law enforcement effort."

Indictments allege that, from February 2006 through January 12, 2008, the 51 defendants listed below conspired to violate the Animal Welfare Act by sponsoring, exhibiting and transporting roosters in animal fighting ventures, and conspired to travel in interstate commerce in aid of racketeering through a gambling business enterprise. The indictments allege participation in 12 cockfighting derbies:

1. March 11, 2006, in Molalla, Oregon;
2. April 22, 2006, in Warm Springs, Oregon;
3. June 24, 2006, in Wapato, Washington;
4. July 8, 2006, in Wapato, Washington;
5. January 27, 2007, in Sunnyside, Washington;
6. February 15, 2007, in Woodburn, Oregon;
7. March 3, 2007, in Prosser, Washington;
8. April 21, 2007, in Sunny Valley, Oregon;
9. June 23, 2007, in Grand Ronde, Oregon;
10. July 14, 2007, in Grand Ronde, Oregon;
11. December 1, 2007, in Grand Ronde, Oregon;
12. January 12, 2008, in Grand Ronde, Oregon.

A separate indictment charges 14 defendants with participating in an illegal gambling business and seeks forfeiture of 11 pieces of real property in Woodburn, Grand Ronde, Sunny Valley, Jefferson, Silverton, Philomath, Cottage Grove, Beavercreek, and Warm Springs, Oregon, and Sunnyside, Washington.

Accompanying this press release is a representative indictment describing the illegal cockfighting activity and a copy of the gambling indictment.

If convicted, the maximum penalties are:

Conspiracy—five years in prison, \$250,000 fine;
Violation of the Animal Welfare Act—three years in prison, \$250,000 fine;
Interstate Travel in Aid of a Racketeering Enterprise—five years in prison, \$250,000 fine;
Illegal Gambling Business—five years in prison, \$250,000 fine.

Charged in the cockfighting-related indictments are:

*Sergio Gonzalez-Brizuela, 61, Woodburn, Oregon
 *Pedro Cisneros, Jr., 66, Arlington, Washington
 James Landers Clem, Jr., 45, Klamath Falls, Oregon
 Laurie Lynn Guerrero, 42, Grants Pass, Oregon
 Alberto Esparza-Vasquez, 44, Hillsboro, Oregon
 *Francisco Biez Soto, 43, Silverton, Oregon
 Miguel Ochoa Sanchez, 23, Silverton, Oregon
 *Francisco Almaguer, 43, Outlook, Washington
 Jaime Alberto Enriquez, 27, Madras, Oregon
 Salvador Gonzales-Osornio, 37, Salem, Oregon
 Julio Barocio, 27, Brooks, Oregon
 *Chris Gensaw Requa, 51, Warm Springs, Oregon
 *Benjamin Garcia, 47, Woodburn, Oregon
 Rafael Ramirez-Garcia, 38, Prosser, Washington
 *Thomas Leroy Critser, 49, Sunny Valley, Oregon
 *John Arthur Robertson, Jr., 57, Grand Ronde, Oregon
 *Juaquin Ruiz, 32, Sunnyside, Washington
 Ignacio Avila-Flores, 40, Aurora, Oregon
 *Santiago Ornelas-Morales, 33, Beaver Creek, Oregon
 Agustin Ortega-Lopez, 33, Woodburn, Oregon
 Jaime Esparza Guerrero, 32, Grants Pass, Oregon
 Armando Bucio-Cisneros, 26, Prosser, Washington
 *Margarito Villa-Velazquez, 33, Jefferson, Oregon
 Javier Garcia-Marquez, 44, Salem, Oregon
 Daniel Puentes-Nunez, 34, Crabtree, Oregon
 Alvaro Duenas-Quintero, 42, Salem, Oregon
 Eloy Martinez-Perez, 44, Portland, Oregon
 Ruben Saltos-Godina, 35, Yakima, Washington
 *Johnnie Junior Hogan, 61, Cottage Grove, Oregon
 Antonio Lopez-Murillo, 50, Sisters, Oregon
 Estevan Mendoza-Cervantes, 41, Moxee, Washington
 Pedro Cabanilla-Bonilla, 42, Hillsboro, Oregon
 Donald Lee Granger, 45, North Bend, Oregon
 Jorge Duenas-Quintero, 36, Salem, Oregon
 Daniel Barocio, 28, Salem, Oregon
 Marlin Gene Scharer, 58, Woodburn, Oregon
 Pedro Garcia-Maciell, 48, Madras, Oregon
 Dorothy Howtopat, 19, Warm Springs, Oregon
 Julio Cesar Garcia-Vargas, 23, Woodburn, Oregon
 Fernando Gonzalez-Milera, 28, Woodburn, Oregon
 *Maria Salud Garcia, 37, Woodburn, Oregon
 Martha Ofelia Menchaca, 23, Woodburn, Oregon
 Antonio Soto-Espinoza, 36, Yakima, Washington
 Miguel Angel Mejia-Gutierrez, 39, Tigard, Oregon
 Gregorio Ochoa-Figueroa, 39, Sunnyside, Oregon
 *Asension Moreno-Ramos, 53, Philomath, Oregon

J. Miguel Ornelas-Morales, 35, Damascus, Oregon
Aureliano Olvera, 37, Beaverton, Oregon
Felipe Olvera, 39, Beaverton, Oregon
Rafael Sanchez-Pliego, 26, Beaverton, Oregon
Mauro Gonzalez-Pulido, 42, Zillah, Washington

*Indicates defendants charged both in the illegal gambling indictment and in the cockfighting-related indictment.

There are also eight indictments charging defendants with drug-trafficking crimes, including conspiracy to manufacture, distribute and possess cocaine, methamphetamine and crack cocaine between February 2006 and March 11, 2008, by:

**Miguel Ochoa Sanchez, 23, Silverton, Oregon
**Francisco Biez Soto, 43, Silverton, Oregon
Juan Antonio Soto-Lopez, 29, Silverton, Oregon
Lucila Rodriguez, 61, Mt. Angel, Oregon
Nazario Rodriguez, Jr., 60, Mt. Angel, Oregon
Nicholoas Davila-Ceja, 48, Salem, Oregon

Others charged are:

Distribution of Methamphetamine:

**Julio Barocio, 27, Brooks, Oregon
Valentin Barocio, 26, Salem, Oregon
Alfonso Salazar Kats, 37, Salem, Oregon
Rafael Michaelena-Barrientos, 36, Salem, Oregon
**Jaime Alberto Enriquez, 27, Madras, Oregon
Nectali Rivera Vallejo, 30, Salem, Oregon

Distribution of Methamphetamine and Use of a Minor in the Transaction:

Guadalupe R. Osornio, 40, Salem, Oregon
**Salvador Gonzales-Osornio, 37, Salem, Oregon

Conspiracy to Distribute Methamphetamine and Distribution of Methamphetamine:

Marco Antonio Diaz-Ayala, 52, Salem, Oregon
Alberto Macias, 46, Albany, Oregon
Lucila Rodriguez, as above
Nazario Rodriguez, as above

**Indicates defendants charged in both cockfighting and drug indictments.

Potential penalties for the drug charges range from mandatory minimum terms of five to ten years, to maximum terms of 40 years to life imprisonment, along with fines ranging from \$2 million to \$4 million. Use of a child in a drug transaction doubles the maximum prison term.

The investigation was led by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) (Salem and Yakima offices), the Keizer Police Department, Marion County Sheriff's Office, Salem Police Department, and the Yakima County Sheriff's Office.

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) is the criminal investigative arm of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and has jurisdiction to pursue allegations of animal fighting. OIG special agents were one of the lead investigative agencies in this case, referred to as Operation Tattered Wing. A new Federal law went into effect in May 2007 that increased the penalty for animal fighting from a misdemeanor to a felony. The law also prohibits the possession of knives, gaffs, and other paraphernalia used in cockfights. Operation Tattered Wing is the third significant animal fighting investigation that OIG has conducted in 2007-2008, and the second prosecution in the country charging the new felony animal fighting law.

The following agencies also provided crucial assistance in the arrests and searches: the U.S. Marshals Service, Oregon and Yakima, Washington (USMS); the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF); U. S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Detention and Removal Operations; the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Violent Crimes Task Force, Washington; U. S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Yakima Washington; the Social Security Administration, Office of Inspector General; the Animal Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA; Benton County, Oregon Sheriff's Office; Benton County Task Force, Washington; Clackamas County Sheriff's Office; Klamath County Sheriff's Office; Klamath Interagency Narcotics Team; Klamath Falls Police Department; Law Enforcement Against Drugs (LEAD) Task Force, Washington; Oregon State Police (OSP); Polk County Sheriff's Office; Polk County Inter-Agency Narcotics Team (POINT); Warm Springs Police Department; Woodburn Police Department; Yakama Nation Tribal Police Department; Yakima City-County Narcotics Unit; Yakima County Sheriff's Office; Yakima Police Department; and Yamhill County Sheriff's Office.

An indictment is only an accusation of a crime, and defendants should be presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Stephen F. Peifer and Geoffrey Barrow, and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Adrian Brown.

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